

REMARKS

In the Official Action mailed on **January 25, 2005**, the Examiner reviewed claims 1-5, 7-16, 18-27 and 29-33, Claims 6, 17 and 23 were cancelled. Claims 1-5, 7-16, 18-27, and 29-33 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Hardy et al (USPN 6,073,242, hereinafter "Hardy").

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) and 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Independent claims 1, 12, and 23 were rejected as being anticipated by Hardy. Applicant respectfully points out that Hardy teaches away from the present invention because Hardy teaches using **a single server** for both authentication services and signature services (see Hardy, col. 4, line 22 to col. 5, line 14).

In contrast, the present invention uses **an authentication server that is separate** from the signature server (see FIG. 1 and page 9, line 26 to page 10, line 3 of the instant application). This is beneficial because it eliminates a single point of attack on the authentication/signature services. It is not obvious to separate functions between these servers because doing so involves providing a mechanism to facilitate automatic interactions between the servers. There is nothing within Hardy, either explicit or implicit, which suggests using an authentication server that is separate from the signature server.

Accordingly, Applicant has amended independent claims 1, 12, and 23 to clarify that the present invention uses an authentication server that is separate from the signature server. Dependent claims 2-3, 5, 13-14, 16, 24-25, and 27 have been canceled without prejudice. Dependent claims 4, 15, and 26 have been amended to correct antecedent basis.

Hence, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 1, 12, and 23 as presently amended are in condition for allowance. Applicant also submits that claims 4 and 7-11, which depend upon claim 1, claims 15 and 18-22,

which depend upon claim 12, and claims 26 and 29-33, which depend upon claim 23, are for the same reasons in condition for allowance and for reasons of the unique combinations recited in such claims.

CONCLUSION

It is submitted that the present application is presently in form for allowance. Such action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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